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IN HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

R. D. BRODIE

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IN HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

IN HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

SONNETS AND POEMS

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BY

R. D. BRODIE

Author of "Changing Voices and Other Poems"



THE TORCH PRESS
CEDAR RAPIDS IOWA

1923

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IN HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

Men come and go so many various ways,
Where masses throng on common errands bent,
The powers that do, by unseen forces sent,
Into the business of the hast'ning days.
Such various ways, which multitudes have sought,
Worn bare by million millions' passing feet,
Their scenes bound, by associations meet,
To lives that echo what the ears have caught,
Are but the wider ways in which our life
Touches, or beckons to, our fellow-folks,
Laughing with them, or wincing 'neath the strokes
That wound them, as they wrestle in the strife
Which all must share who, earnest, seek to go
From low to high, and still to high from low.

But other quieter ways lie open wide,
Where pensive minds may wander if they will
In body, or alone, by vale and hill,
Through all the glory of the country-side,
Gathering the sweetness of fair flowers that be
Or flowers of Eden from their native air,
Soul reaching soul in a communion rare,
While hush or storm falls on field and tree.
Such, too, are ways of men frequented more
Than eye can always see. Not always there
The form visible, when glad spirits bear
Their loving search far toward the further shore,
Seeking such gems as others there have found,
As, bravely, they pursued th' appointed round.

DISSEVERED FRIENDSHIP

Again! What art thou who, in human shape,
Cometh to this quiet cloister when I come,
Elusive as the wind, persisting still
To vision, while to touch impalpable?
Stay! I will no more pursue. But tell me
What thou art, whence, and wherefore thou art
here.

Not man, sayest thou?

A soul that is lost?

Not a soul!

What, then, art thou, living shade?
A friendship, sayest thou, that a friend hath lost?
I do not understand. Can this thing be
That we live in our sev'ral parts and these
May when they will detach themselves and roam
As thou; and we continue, minus these,
So many fractions only of ourselves?
Even so, thou sayest. Love never dies,
Nor friendship, nor one God-like quality
Of man. They are but severed from the life;
And so await, separate and alone,
The coming of a day more greatly blessed.
How cam'st thou to be lost? By whom? And why?
You grew! From two strong lives that were as one,
Who oft within these walls in worship joined,
Their act a concord and a symphony.
Both were beautiful, but in an ill time
One heard, —

Speak on —

The other's praise so loud
He thought his own eclipsed, and so a seed
Of jealousy found place to rest and root,
And growing, vitiate a virtuous mind.
How then?

Its growth was slow and gradually
The strength of love's flood receded. A word
That lacked in warmth, a puzzling thought to one,
Coolness perceptible, resentment felt,
Knowledge of unkind words, more dreadful still
The bitterness of disappointed pride;
Then treachery that, eager, sought to slay
Because it feared its malice was unveiled;
Saddest, most cruel, most accursed of all,
'Twas when the lips bore forward in a kiss
The hidden knife was thrust near where the heart,
Once loved, beat warm. The treach'rous blow
was weak,
Because the hand shook, and the trembling blade
Glanced on the rib, not harmless, for the blood
Flowed crimson o'er the tunic's spotlessness.
Nor yet was fatal, though the heart it missed
Chilled, and forthwith failed of half its function.
Before the knife's thrust?

Nay, 'twas but the sting
Of falseness recognized that froze its warmth.
Why com'st thou here?

Once this quiet called them
When their souls were drawn to God.

Thinkest thou
That they may come again?

The memories
Of former joys will draw stronger than horses.
But memory of broken faith?

'Twill die,
Is dead even now. The assuaging years
Have closed its wounds and made a way o'er which
Friendship may come again into its own.

THE LABOR OF LOVE

Willing are the hands and willing the feet,
For the labor of love is always sweet.
Swiftly they scour the woodlands o'er,
Swiftly, carefully, till they spy
The lowly pine in shelter dry;
Swiftly gather its emerald store,
Swiftly, swiftly, still more and more;
Swiftly from thence their prize they bore.
Glad, glad were their hearts, with a festal glee,
As they dressed the church for the bride to be.
Happy the man who such bride should win,
Happy the church she should wed within,
Happy their friends, and happy their kin,
And happy their lives should be.

They scoured the woodlands and scoured the mead.
To wed with the evergreens flowers they need;
And the daisy's white o'er a golden heart
Was a fitting robe for a bridal part.
Fast they gather the daisies fair,
Fast with them to the church repair,
Fast their baskets they fill again,
While glad hearts beat a bridal strain.
Happy the man who such bride should win,
Happy the church she should wed within,
Happy their friends and happy their kin,
And happy their lives should be.

Then they wreathed the green with the daisies'
white,
Till chancel was studded with specks of light,
Till the arch that rose the altar o'er
Was festooned fair with the bridal flower,
Where the bride herself should take her place,
And crown the whole with her bridal grace.
And the song in their hearts was prophecy
Of this and of other sweet brides to be, —
Happy the men who such brides should win,
Happy the church they should wed within,
Happy their friends, and happy their kin,
And happy their lives should be.

DEATH IS YOURS

O suffering heart, let not thy patience go ;
Thy guerdon even now draws near ;
Death cometh to relieve thee of thy pain
And give thee triumph on thy bier.
From thine inheritance the vilest giaours
May not debar, and death is yours.

WINNING POWER

Naked, and wounded, and sore, he lay
Where the way is wild and lone;
Priest and Levite, who journeyed that way,
Looked on him but journeyed on.
On his helpless form the fierce sun beat,
From his wounds the blood still ran;
Half-dead he was when along that road
There came a Samaritan.
Son of a mixed and a hated race,
He bore the heart of a man;
A man in need! He asked not his creed,
But swift to his succor ran.
A traveller's all, and to give it glad
To the robbers' wounded prey;
Cleansing and strength, a beast to ride on,
And rest on his health-ward way.
The power of creed, in a neighbor's need,
Was lost from the heart of man,
When the wounded Jew was found, in woe,
By the kind Samaritan.

Angeline Levine, of good French stock,
Who knelt in the church of Rome,
And Margaret Scott, of the creed of Knox,
And the hardy thistle's home,
On the city's street, for untold weeks,
When they were on worship bent,
Met as strangers cool and passed by rule,
And neither thought to relent.

A whirling car, with a sickening jar,
Struck a black waif of the street;
Who, bruised and bleeding and helpless, fell
Where to pass these two must meet.
Their aloofness fled, with its hidden dread,
As a night-bird flees the sun;
And the creed of lips was lost right there
In a good deed to be done.
A new light fell on the hearts of two
While their hands were soothing pain;
And they saw that love which would serve their
Lord
Was the faith that He would gain.

OUT OF DOORS

There's a sighing in the trees and a softness in the
breeze,
And, overhead, the dull gray clouds portentous are
of rain;
The big pines in the dooryard are bending gently
forward,
Like dear old ladies who, at tea, each other enter-
tain.
Oft I wonder if they know, from the winds that
round them blow,
Things hid from tiny mortals on this weary earth
below.
Or am I only dreaming, when bowing I think seem-
ing
Of wide and wondrous knowledge I would greatly
love to know,
And the sighings that we hear in that upper pine-
tree sphere
Are but the various voices of the witless winds that
blow?

SO BE IT

Spirit of hope, thy blessing pour
On those who wait in weariness;
Inspire anew the faltering will,
And bid it — On, achieve success.

Spirit of power, come to the weak
In all thine energizing might;
Raise drooping hands, and feeble knees
Make strong to follow paths of right.

NOT THIS TIME

The morning is cold. A sled would run hard,
Squeaking its way o'er the crisp, frozen snow.
It's too cold for horses. Fifteen below!
And wind raising Cain in the north barn-yard.

The stable door's loose; but how to hold nails
In weather like this is what I don't know.
I wish it was warmer. Hear the wind blow!
And see the tall saplings whipping like flails!

There's harness to mend, but wife would not hear
If I sought to bring it in where it's warm.
Canned heat would be great, you bet, on the farm,
If it wasn't, like 'most all we buy, too dear.

But something like that would suit me today.
I could warm my little shop in a trice:
It's easy to work when everything's nice,
Nothing to trouble or be in the way.

The split wood's 'most gone. I ought to saw more,
But the saw's got dull and out of set, too.
It's too cold to fix it. All I can do
Is to start for Gossip the grocer's store.

Guess I won't. That old saw's just got to do.
I've limb-wood enough to last for a while.
That will warm me. Then a touch of the file
Will help me to put the big fellows through.

FRIENDSHIP

How beautiful is friendship. When in storms of
life

Our fragile bark is sadly shaken and near lost,
How lovely friendship's form, so firm and staunch
and true,

An anchoring hold and succor for the tempest-
tossed.

How good to know when, in the rage of slanderous
tongues,

The heart is sick, the spirit drooping, pierced
with pain,

That friendship trusts its friend, nor will it will-
ing hear

The words of ill it knows are meant to cast a
stain.

THE MAKING OF MEN

God takes our clay and on His wheel
 He bends and moulds it to design;
Each touch of beauty He imparts
 Is made to preconceived line.
Howe'er so hard the wheel may press,
 How sore soe'er the moulding be,
'Tis love and mercy infinite
 For life infinite shaping me.

Life's worth into His crucible
 Life's Master, for refining, lays;
With patience and solicitude
 He watches o'er its fiery ways.
As each impurity ascends,
 He marks the metal's changing phase;
Until, the last dark cloud released,
 Reflected, He can see His face.

EVENING SHADOWS

Evening shadows,
 Balmy air,
Fancies flitting
 Everywhere;
Lost friends coming
 Into view,
Friendships forming
 Fresh and new.
What has been here?
 What will be?
Evening shadows
 Tell to me.
Whisper softly
 In my ear,
Is all well with
 Who are dear?
Are lips moving,
 Sweet and fair,
As they ask my
 Weal in pray'r?
Moves a hand, there,
 Unperceived,
In caresses
 Unreceived?
Were I near it,
 Would it lie
On my forehead,
 Lovingly?

Are there eyes there
From the past,
Ceaseless watching?
Love may last
Beyond the day,
Through the night,
Till, far away,
Faith is sight.
Evening shadows
You shall cease.
All is day there,
All is peace.

NEITHER POVERTY NOR RICHES

Spread no darker cloud lest the spirit despair,
And falter and break in its circumscribed lot;
Unwilling earth yields men so scanty a share,
And for each morsel gained some pest must be
fought.

Lay no greater burden on shoulders that stoop
And backs that are aching from constant duress;
Nor add one more furrow to wrinkles that troop
On cheek and on forehead in care's sad caress.

Let never the hunger that threatens arrive,
Nor perishing cold our frail garments pierce
through:
The hungry may steal, and the perishing strive
For warmth that abundance may flaunt in their
view.

Not ours be the wealth of grand tapestried halls,
Nor the menial hosts that a palace adorn.
Wealth exudes the poison by which virtue falls;
Pride raises its forehead before God in scorn.

Ours be the blessing of enough, and not less
Nor more, save as stewards we suffering erase;
Let ours be the home where each childhood's success
Grows up round a mother whose household's her
praise.

THE SEEKER

"Rides no one with thee, weary traveller?"

"None; I ride alone."

"Far hast thou journeyed,
For thy steed is spent; what mission urges on?"

"I seek a land wherein to rest, where hands
That willing work may work all unopprest;
Where men to other men are kind, and none
His brother seeks to grind, to give for bread
A stone."

"Far hast thou sought, but farther still
Thy quest shall lead thee on. There is no land
Such as you seek, nor ever has been known.
Rest here thy self and weary steed, and share
Such as we have."

"Nay, not yet may I rest;
Though far the goal I seek, it must be won."

"Rest thee here; though thy heart be stout, the years
Sit heavily upon thee. Rest awhile,
If but to gather strength to journey on."

"I may not rest, but journey ever on."

"Thou seekest but the phantom of a dream.
Man never knew the land or state you seek;
They were not, are not, and can scarcely seem
To be. 'Tis not in mankind to be kind
To man beyond a measure circumscribed
By self-advantage. The past gives no sign
Of such a dream fulfilled. Why not resign
Thyself to what is today, — the essence

And the garnered beauty of the ages?"

"This quest must not cease. From far down the past
I come, and on through future years I go,
Much buffeted, but unswerving. Sad years
Yet may gather into periods long,
Ere o'er their spasms quietness steals and born
From out their suffering there appear the things
I seek, man's brotherhood, unselfish joy
That sings of service not of gain. Till then
I journey on."

RAIN IN SUGAR-TIME

We've had a great run — the best in some years,
Though now clouds darken the bright morning
sky;

Light winds stir softly the boughs of the trees
With a sound like a sad, low, wailing cry.
The crows fly low. Soon a cold rain will fall,
And the buckets be rily, one and all.

There's sap for good two days' boiling ahead,
But what's in the buckets must come right in;
We want all there is, but we want it clean
And safe in the tubs ere the rains begin.
Then hitch up Jerry and Jim to the sled
And hustle it briskly into the shed.

With buckets turned up we heed not the rain;
We can laugh at the storm `raging without;
In comfort we watch the arch-fire's red flame,
And see its rich products gather about.
'Tis a gladsome work, for each golden cake
Will joy to some child of sugar-land take.

FALLING DIAMONDS

Its warming rays the morning sun
Lends to the maple trees;
Their wealth, by chilly night bound fast,
In graciousness it frees.
Their silver nectar starts once more
Its trickling drops to spill,
Glad gifts from out their treasury
To wait their captor's will.

As from its guide each drop sets forth
In sudden, sharp descent,
It gleams a diamond — brilliant thing
One moment ere is spent
The transient glory. In that flash
Is all of life it knows
As individual, separate, —
The rest with myriad others flows.

But that brief, momentary light,
Caught from the sunshine's gleam,
Made diamonds of each single drop
In all that humble stream.

TO URR: A SONG THAT WAS SOUGHT

O Urr! And must a lover beg
A lover's song for thee,
Whose minstrel waters music make
From source unto the sea?

But who sufficingly can sing
Whom three-score years prevent?
A gleam of life at dawning born
To pass with night's descent.

For thou from morning mists of time
Unceasingly hast sung;
While o'er milleniums of years
The requiem has rung.

When summer skies were calm and blue,
Gentle and sweet thy strain;
In majesty thy thunder rolled
When freshets tore amain.

What hand can strike so sweet a chord?
What voice be meet to praise
Thy music through the changing years—
To now, from ancient days?

Yet lovers love thee, — otherwise
Than for thy many years:
Thy voice has soothed the troubled heart
And quieted its fears.

And often has thy lap, lap, lap,
Over thy pebbled fords
Sung lullaby to stormy thoughts
And words that pierced like swords.

And, Oh! The dreams that have been dreamt
When, seated by thy stream,
The enchantment of thy waters
Set fancy's fires agleam,

When bright against the great unseen
Grew scenes of far away,
And wondrous things that never were,
Save in the unknown day.

Still, tenderly, these linger on,
Too precious far to perish,
Sweet memories hid in loving hearts —
Visions fond to cherish.

And while thy music holds its sway
(Ever and for ever),
Thy power o'er hearts of changing men
Shall fail? No! Oh, never!

But aiding in thy power to hold
Thy willing captives, still,
Are overhanging arch of green,
And mead, and near-by hill,

The otter's sudden eerie plump,
The moorhen's silent track,

The brood she hides so cleverly
Where roots are thick and black,

The song that fills the upper space
Thy waters cannot reach,
Where lark and mavis wake the skies
With notes like angels' speech.

These all are thine, — a part of thee
In memory's pictured view, —
And nature each hath bound to each
By ties both old and new.

And other things are thine as well
By ties that do not break, —
The record of the long-past years,
The deeds that kingdoms make,

The love that sweetened humble lives
That passed thy waters near,
And left nought but the memory
Of common hope and fear.

And thine, too, are that other folk
Of fin and gleaming scale,
To wile whom from thy sheltering deep
The man-folk would prevail.

Oft vain the lure, oft vain the wait
In hope and patience long;
But he who meets the laughing jest
Has first enjoyed thy song.

What confidences are exchanged,
Few of the jesters know;
Nor how the voice thy lovers hear
Can soothe or set aglow.

How can they know the angler's joy
When in his creel is laid
A speckled beauty, for which prize
Great store of wit he paid?

Or how that greater joy that comes
When memory pictures 'new
The circumstances of a strife
That only you two knew?

Again he treads thy grassy bank
Beneath the arching green;
Again he holds the doubling rod
Against the rushing stream;

Again he sees the side shine red,
Again the fouling line;
Again he feels the failing hope
Betokened by that sign;

Again that short sharp sigh that tells
The parting of the cast;
Again the swift and rueful look,
The glimpse that was the last.

And then the angler's short-lived grief —
For the fish he didn't get

In his forever now, held fast
In memory's landing net.

And many, many are the ties
Thy lovers bind to thee,
Stored in that wondrous treasure-vault,
The hall of memory.

But roll thou on thy singing way
From source unto the main,
And let thy lovers fondly hope
To see thy streams again.

A LOST HOSTESS

Somewhere, perhaps, that hand still spreads
God's gifts of food and cheer;
Somewhere, perhaps, her guests are glad,
But 'tis no longer here.
Somewhere, perhaps, she's wielding still
That power to harmonize,
That, subtly, to each varying mood,
Apt psychic touch applies,
From out a multiminded throng,
By kindly soothing grace,
To bring a gladsome unity,
A smile on every face.
Sometime, somewhere, God only knows,
(It lies in His behest)
She may again my hostess be,
And I her willing guest.

DISILLUSIONED

So fare we forth. What holds the world of new
Within its misty future's chambers hid,
For us who to adventure now are bid
By stern necessity's unsparing crew?
We dreamed, — O foolish tantalizing view —
All fell obstructions from our course had slid,
And on fair streets with easy steps we did
Our restful way in comfort staid pursue.

But o'er our dream there hung the cleaving steel
That 'twixt hope and fulfillment severance made,
A tyrant's power, in crushing, hateful raid,
Grinding the poor and burdened 'neath its heel.
Not ours must ought of beauty be or joy
That pride-borne tyrant can in hate destroy.

WHOSE IS THE IMAGE?

Who, who is this I dimly see
In waking vision frequently?
Environed now in great success,
With hands that open but to bless;
And now, again, in craven mood,
Bewailing, seeking, unfound good;
Now rapt in joy, of friendship born,
That lights his countenance as the morn;
Now drooping, worn, in raiment rude,
The prey of friendless solitude;
Now begging for release from life,
Its burdened way, its selfish strife;
Rallied, anon, from dust and tears,
By spirit-touch dispersing fears;
That poise, those hands, I surely know;
Whose is the image varying so?

FACING THE SHADOWS

There's fog on the sea tonight, thick fog.

How hard will it be for the men who sweep!
And Jamie, my strength, is somewhere with them,
Clearing the course of the ships through the deep.
No whimper nor flinch with his mates or him,
Though greater the danger when light is dim;
But we women wait with a deeper fear
When the fog comes down on the way they clear;
And it hurts to feel that one is so weak:
But be still, my heart, or be brave to speak.

The stockings must grow and the shirts be wove,
Though frail be the hands that follow the wires;
The ships must come back and the ships must rove,
(The seamen's courage our labor inspires);
And to keep them safe from the fiendish Hun,
The sweepers must sweep spite of fog or gun;
But we women know what a price is paid
To sweep up the mines that the fiends have laid.
But our lads are brave, and so we must be,
For the love of the lads who sweep the sea.

I'm weary, too, since our John went across
Wi' the Lothian lads to the fight in France.
Oh! I think that for gude news o' the lad
These rickety legs would grow strong and dance.
He was such a joy to Jamie and me,
As kind to us baith as a son could be.

So like Jamie, too, in his manly ways,
When we were young in our courting days.
But the Prussian beast must be caged with bars;
Till then our brave young lads will to the wars.

But Jeannie, (did a better lass e'er grace
Such humble hame as working folks can keep?)
Jeannie is with me, be it storm or still,
Though long her walk she's here at night to sleep
And help me, hand and foot, baith night and morn,
A mither's lass if ever such was born.
Maybe there's brawer lasses. Who will tell?
Jeannie is braw enough. God guard her well.
'Tis nearly seven; she will soon be here
To make the house glad wi' her song and cheer.

I see her coming past the big oak tree,
But some one's wi' her! Oh! Be still, my heart!
Foolish! 'Tis what should be and what will be.

God grant her happy mating when we part!
Was I deceived? She comes, and quite alone.
Poor jealous I! So ready to make moan!
She must not know. Jeannie, lass, what kept you?
Did they not give you all that was your due?
Is there good news from the French front to-day?
Eat, lass, then read me what the papers say.

Are you not hungry after that long walk?

Lassie, you must eat and keep your strength up.
You cannot work and walk so far on air;

Try some of your own-made mushroom ketchup.

Jeannie, what is the matter wi' you, lass?
Something uncommon sure has come to pass,
You smile so wise-like. What is pleasing you?
And you have set an extra service, too!
Whose hands are these? My boy, my boy! I know
Now, Jeannie, lass, why you were smiling so.

A NEW ADVENTURE

A new adventure lies before. Fare on,
Though strange the unknown ways of this last
quest.

Let not its loneliness thy soul infest
With fears, nor thy present worthy guerdon
Hide from thy view. As erstwhile thou hast gone
To serve, knowing thyself a passing guest
Of all there is, so still be in thy zest
Of service a servant of all. Alone

Pass thou on bravely, not as weary crone
With wringing hands and accents full of woe,
But head erect, and daring all to know,
Be it the best or worst, and make no moan
When it is worst, though glad to raise a cheer
When good is with thee or is drawing near.

COMPLETION

The task I know as mine is nearly done,
The goal I've striven for is very near;
The exaltation lessens, and the fear
Of aimless loneliness, when that is won,
Falls on me like a pall. They who have run
With me in some or all my various ways
Have closed their course, and o'er them others
raise
Memorials of their sojourn 'neath the sun.

Companionless, I look with longing eyes
Toward the mists in which they sank from view;
Heart-hungry, with them once more to renew
The strife against the things we did despise,
The gladness of achievement, the surprise
Of greater deeds than we dared hope to do.

SUGGESTED BY A TYPEWRITER

Through years of which the number is not known,
Man marked his thoughts with various devices,
Each one best by int'rested advices,
Until, through labor hard, to wisdom grown,
He laid aside stylus and chiselled stone,
Painting so bright it yet his heart entices,
The stamping on bricks — he all revises
Till defter manner makes his writing shown.

No longer now a weary workman's groan
Dishonors the craft his heart despises;
But help from invention's gift arises,
Lifting at once the burden and the moan,
While airy iron fingers, thickly set,
Make him his former tedious toil forget.

WHAT OF THE NIGHT

Brother, what of the night?

All still is dark ;

Untruth and envy, juggling doubtful words,
Make awful discords 'mong the race of men.
Sons spurn the wisdom of their sires and curse
The good things that they have, and all the means
By which, from bonds that held the flesh enchained,
They have been freed, with mad steps hastening
To stupefy the mind chains cannot bind.

What of the night?

Deep is the darkness still.

The waves of wrangling roll with clamor loud
Upon a slothful people in whose mind
Is coma. They would not think ; now the waves
Sweep on their wide embrace and bear them down
To what they cannot know.

What of the night?

The night is passing ill.

Day should be here, but all is darkness yet ;
Less dark, but darkness still, nor night, nor day ;
Noisy confusion reigns, and great babbling
Fills all the unstopped avenues of sound.

Is there no light? No truth?

Faint shafts of light

Are here and there, as truth essays her speech,
But these, as distant lightning when 'tis weak,
Are of the darkness quickly overborne.

Brother, see'st thou no more than these?

I see
Through the wide darkness flames arise. A fire
Is set, a purging fire that tries the hearts.
Behind it are sad faces seeking truth.

A THUNDERSTORM

Inky black grew the sky till day seemed to hover
As if caressing the nightfall, still far away;
Hushed was the hot air, while field creatures sought
cover,
Ere the loud thunder crashed with the bright
lightning's play.
Tempestuous defiance it hurled on the field,
As a super-power calling inferiors to yield.
Then its anger subsided and fountains of tears
Flowed forth in rich blessing where its coming
spread fears.

THE DAILY TASK

Up, up, to higher, higher heights still rise:

The resurrection is thy daily task

That, from the baseness and the rags that mask,
Raiseth th' indwelling spirit to the skies.

THE VANISHED SWING

The pole still hangs high overhead

On which once was a swing;

Yearning, it seems, in its silent way,

Now that the swing's been taken away,

For the laughter of a girl at play,

And songs she used to sing;

And both pole and pines alike are dead

Since the music of her singing fled.

GIVING

Give what thou hast. The light that is in thee
Will surely shine, disclosing worth and weal,
If thou but break the circumscribing shard
And casting it away thy light reveal.

BETHESDA

We sit by the pool Bethesda,
But our eyes are too dim to see,
When the angel stirs the waters
Of our life's opportunity.
But who has a seeing brother,
Or who even a seeing friend,
Is thrust in the moving waters
Whose course toward affluence tend.

We sit by the pool Bethesda,
While the world goes swiftly round,
Too weak to stir, when waters move,
From our place on the sick man's ground.
But here a man, by a brother,
And here a husband, by a wife,
Are thrust in the moving waters
And enter the kingdom of life.

FAITH (UNSTABLE)

High rose the waves. The wind against their course
In violence blew, and overbore their skill;
The wearied rowers lost their wonted force,
And aching arms relaxed the zealous will.

Among the curling billows' crested spray
A shadowy form issued into sight;
Fear entered hearts that never feared a fray.
"A spirit comes," they cried in their affright.

Forthwith the spirit spoke, "Be of good cheer;
Your Master, I, who cometh thus to you."
And he, the foremost ever, losing fear —
"Bid me to walk upon the waters, too."

His Master bade him and with joy he trod,
Brave in his love and faith, upon the sea,
Till, for a moment, faith lost hold on God
And nature triumphed. His cry, "Lord save me,"

Brought the almighty outstretched arm to aid,
And love and power both were used to plead
Against such doubt that such a price had paid
When steadfast faith had won a glorious meed.

FAITH (SOUGHT)

O power that mortal may acquire!

Lord, bid it dwell with me,

Unconquerable in its might

Because it is of Thee.

For those, my brethren, who, in pain,

Drag on in life's highway,

Whose joys, by sorrows circumscribed,

Die ere they see bright day,

Whose bodies bend beneath the load

Of the imposing years,

Whose spirits, disappointment-scarred,

Are haunts of withering fears, —

For those, O grant me faultless faith,

Unshaken and serene,

That I may seek and gain for them

Their faith that might have been,

That they to Thee their burdens take,

There, at Thy bidding, lay

Each various ache and wretchedness,

And bear a song away

For those who, eager, press to serve

In strong youth's bright array,

That consecrated be their powers

To righteousness always,

That unto them be freely given
The vision soaring far,
That nought of evil or of earth
Have power that view to mar,

But by its grandeur carried on
And by its spirit led,
One song of praise their life becomes
Unto the Lamb who bled.

For those, O Father, give the faith
To hold their purpose high,
And bear them, stainless through the strife,
To mansions in the sky.

FAITH (INDIVIDUAL)

Wearied with strife the Master came
Where Syrian powers the homage claim.

Ere He could find the rest He sought,
A mother's prayer to Him brought

The sorrow of a daughter dear,
By demon bound in pain and fear.

"Have mercy on me, Lord," she cried,
"Thou Son of David! Health provide."

No answer gave He. On his way
He went, while she ceased not to pray.

"Have mercy, mercy, Lord!" Her pain
Raised oft anew the same refrain.

"Bid her begone." Disciples spoke.
Their words fell on her like a stroke.

She went not. With persistent will
She pled for mercy, — mercy still.

"An alien, thou," He said. "At most,
My mission is to Israel lost."

In worship she before Him falls.
"Lord help me! Hear! A mother calls."

"The bread I to our children take
For dogs I cannot fitly break."

“Truth, Lord. But even dogs may eat
The crumbs that fall by children’s feet.

“Have mercy, Lord. These morsels give,
And bid my tortured daughter live.”

Heroic faith no scorn could daunt!
Raise now on high thy joyful chant.

Thy daughter freed from demon power
Becomes thy faith’s attesting dower:

Thy mother-love has won for thee
The praise of love eternally.

FAITH (NATIONAL)

Dense, dense the storm-clouds that so long maintain
Their sway upon the sodden grievous road,
Where patient people bear their weary load,
Longing for rest, and yet from rest refrain
Until their march is o'er; and from the woe
And night, the labor and the constant pain,
They shall come forth to normal life again,
And light's glad portals in the distance show.

On toward that long-expected gleam they press,
Brave and unyielding 'neath their burden's sway:
Light must grow brighter further on the way,
And easier the path, less the distress.
Still they advance, nor will they be gainsaid:
Morn shall appear most gloriously arrayed.

A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM

A child was He of lowliest birth,
Whom the Father sent here to show
Himself to the sad of a weary earth,
To win them back to a helpful mirth,
To greater hope from its scant and dearth,
From the selfish life to the salve of woe
And joy that willing servants know.

From the Father's home the holy train
Announced the Savior's humble birth,
In glad song that told of heavenly lays,
Of happy mortals and cheerful days,
Of a life grown richer in the rays,
Love, service, peace, and kindest praise,
From the Sun of Righteousness.

The years roll on their weary ways,
Still many are the hearts that grieve;
Not yet do all men own the sway,
Not yet do all men seek the way,
For lust deceiveth cunningly;
But they who on the Child believe
Shall great and greater love achieve.

For hearts that follow the leading Child
Fall never to deepest despair;
No darkest moment's without light,
No sorrow overpowering quite;
Always before is the vision fair,
Always the Child is leading there,
And ever toward Love that's bright.

WHAT SHALL I DO

Master, how many thus have asked of Thee
That they might know their duty definitely?
I, after many ages gone, ask Thee anew, —
What shall I do? What shall I do?

When at the parting of life's several ways I stand
And know not how to choose aright, take Thou my
hand.

Thine be the choice, and Thou the guide unto thy
land.

When, in the daily walk, each day presents its choice,
Each opening calling with its own insistent voice,
Guide Thou my steps that in the end I shall rejoice.

Not mine the choice, O Master, lest, too blind to see,
I fall in slippery ways. Thine, thine the choice
shall be:

I only ask from Thee that I may worthy be.

Each moment guide me. Grant me faith in Thee to
know

That all the steps I take are ordered by Thee, so
That, through them all, I nearer still to Thee shall
grow.

Hear, once again, the prayer, so old, yet ever new:
Master, what shall I do? What shall I do?

CHIDE ME NOT

Chide me not, O gentle Savior,
Weak and fickle though I be,
Faithless oft, still feebly clinging
Unto Thee.

Leave me not, O gracious Savior,
At times when my courage fails,
When the storm-cloud dismays me
And prevails.

Raise me then, O mighty Savior,
Safe from the perilous abyss;
Meet the penitent, returning,
With thy kiss.

Make me yet, O patient Savior,
Faithful, brave, whate'er betide,
One among thy trusted servants,
At thy side.

Keep me there, O loving Savior,
Serving in true humility,
From all fear and weakness severed,
And set free.

WAITING TO BE GRACIOUS

Mother was quiet as she knitted.

Those lips so much given to song
Were set close in firm decision:

You knew there was something wrong.

Oftentimes her eyes would wander

From her knitting to the wall,
Where, listlessly, a little boy
Played alone with bat and ball.

Sad longing filled those loving eyes

For the lad she had ostracised,
But the firm mouth never softened,
Though she, too, was penalized.

But the bat and ball lost favor,

And the lad's discomfort grew;
He sat for a time, irresolute,
Then he dropped a tear or two.

A moment more, and then a sob

That little breast was shaking,
Its pain and grief could not be checked,
The heart within was breaking.

The mother's eye had seen his plight;

His sorrow had reached her heart;
The yearning eyes were filled with tears:
How long could they keep apart?

Up rose the lad. His tear-wet cheeks
His little sleeve held hidden;
Sad and ashamed, he stumbled 'cross
To kneel down there unbidden.

Something, perhaps, he would have said,
But mother's lips had found him;
And mother's arms, in loving clasp,
Were gathered tightly round him.

WILL O' THE WISP

It fared before him in youth's purple days so glad,
A speck that gleamed far, far ahead, yet seemed
to say:

I am the promise and the door of glorious day;
By him who enters can all his desires be had.

He dreamed of riches and requited love beside,
And bravely, hopefully, he followed where they
led;

Riches he won, but after many years had sped;
A woman, too, who in his prime became his bride.

Still faint and far before that pregnant promise
gleamed,

Suggesting yet, with strange enchantment in its
lure,

That for the heart insatiate there was still a cure,
Though wealth and love of woman were not what
they seemed.

Always the longing, as of emptiness unfilled,

Though what he really wished he now could
scarcely tell;

Always the light that beckoned, Come, all will be
well;

They only lose who, quitting, let their hope be
killed.

He followed till declining strength had told its tale,
And vanity its sting had planted in his mind.

Was human effort ever at a loss to bind
Achievement to the thing it promised without fail?

The pulses slowed; but ever still, like floating star,
He saw a light that drew him with its haunting
glow
To promises of youth renewed, and laughter's
flow,
Until a bowl was broken and he felt the jar.

INTO THY HANDS

Into Thy hands, — The slumber-land is calling;
Mine eyes are heavy, keep Thou me;
Into Thy hands, — O let no dread of falling
Despoil sweet slumber's ministry.

Into Thy hands, — Forgive the unforgiven;
Inspire the thought that pleases Thee;
Into Thy hands, — By Thine own mercy shriven,
To Thee my weary soul would flee.

I loved the day, — In its beauty and gladness,
My senses unfettered I fondly did steep;
Now grant me, in darkness, that still free from
sadness
I trust Thee unwavering, unconscious in sleep.

SOUR GRAPES

Yours are the sadnesses of hopes that sink
Dismayed before the interposing veil;
Yours, too, the bitterness of those who wail,
Knowing 'tis but their own of which they drink.
Ye fear the future, that to you is dark,
In which may perish life's low, flickering light;
Remorse clings to thee, with its sting and blight:
Shall ever morn a brighter moment mark?

Of years of waste but ashes gray remain,
And memories sad of misspent yesterdays;
The word you speak your inward wound betrays,
Exclaiming as you seek escape from pain:
How vain are all things! How that truth is not!
Nor hath good been, nor shall be in man's lot!

HOPE

Lift up your eyes unto the hills above,
By everflowing springs with verdure spread;
The noble and the brave their grasses tread
And feast beneath a banner that is love.
The fairness of the Lily there is seen,
And there the grace of Sharon's lovely Rose;
Its tender note the gentle dove bestows,
While Judah's Lion guards the peaceful scene.

No more their songs are drowned by cruel war,
No more the wails of mourners reach the ear;
Broken forever are the bow and spear,
And perfect faith drives haunting fears afar.
Their Prince is with them; at his feet they pour
Their grateful worship hence forevermore.

BUT YESTERDAY

Dark, dark are the skies with the dismal cloud
That shuts out the sun's fair gleam;
And lonesome and sad are the lanes leaf-strewn,
As trees shed their yellow stream.

But yesterday, but yesterday,
These woods were laughing and bright and gay
With call of bird and squirrel at play.

But yesterday!
Was it but yesterday?

Bright, bright was the view his heart led him to,
Ere youth was a by-gone time;
And fair was the road his light footsteps trod,
And merrily bells did chime.

But yesterday, but yesterday,
Ere the skies grew dark and the hills grew gray,
And mourners passed sadly on their way.

But yesterday!
Was it but yesterday?

Red, red were the buds when the South wind said,
Come, open your lips and kiss;
For the mantle of love in joy is spread,
Its comfort you must not miss.

But yesterday, but yesterday!
Now the winds bite keen and the dead leaves fall,
And they spread themselves in summer's pall
Since yesterday.
Was it but yesterday?

High, high in purpose went youth bravely on,
Singing a song by the way,
Till the toil and heat of the weary road
Choked the words the lips would say.
But yesterday, but yesterday!
Now many a hope is fallen and dead,
And small the achievement in their stead,
Since yesterday.
Was it but yesterday?

HOW THE TOWN WAS BUILT

Away on the sandy prairie, in the heart of the Middle West,

A tiny hamlet of feeble folks were seized with a great unrest;

For of the barren rocks their fathers cursed, and turned from in scorn,

With the ring of steel and the rush of men a great new hope was born.

Then, as they measured the possible chance, great dreams their vision filled:

With one accord, in hope's new-found voice, they said, Let us rise and build.

Then they builded — out and further — till woods and fields alike were street,

With growing force endeavoring to keep pace with incoming feet;

For the once-scorned rocks now gathered, from many widely scattered lands,

Those wandering men who, unceasing, seek the stone-work with eager hands.

They came from far frozen Finland, from Norse lands, and from Britain's shore,

Following hopes of perfect homes, or the lure of the golden ore.

With them in that modern Babel was joined a
greatly varied crew
Of sunny Italy's swarthy race, of German, Russian,
Pole, and Jew.
And, truly, 'twas a marvelous thing how that
strange make-up contrived
To work together with one will until such good re-
sults arrived.
If Stanilowski's Polish tongue no single English
word could name,
He stood by his English neighbor, and they both
drove nails just the same.

They builded high on the prairie and they builded
low in the swamp;
They heeded not the dry sand-blast nor the ills that
follow the damp;
All obstacles were swept away in that eager per-
sistent rush;
And this day the hoe was busy where only yesterday
was brush.
The quail came peeking shyly where last year she
hid her little nest;
And scolded sadly when she found a babe upon its
mother's breast.

'Tis strange; but Griffith Griffiths, Griffith's son,
and Swan the son of Swan
Have built upon adjoining lots in disregard of race
and clan.

Also, Sam Gray and Edith Jones agreed two races
should unite;

And others doing as they did declared their plan was
wholly right.

Now these young folks, all, are building homes for
that strong race that shall be,

When, out of many, one is wrought in this great
mill of destiny.

DESPISED AND REJECTED

By ancient paths, in the long ago,
They came and went as the burdened go;
They paused to teach the race that was then
To shun the false and the fear of men;
To buy the truth and to hold it fast
Wherever their lot in life was cast.
These sages the world of now reveres,
Though then their life was in pain and tears.

And once there came, in the fullest time,
A Life, than all others more sublime;
A Voice that, amid the world's deep roar,
Streams of tenderness ever did pour;
And ever His touch to life did raise
The sad who lay in sorrow's lone ways;
Yet shame and a cross on him were laid
When by a false bosom friend betrayed.

And others, who in His steps have trod
And borne their witness that He was God,
Have come where the former light was dim,
And have bid men look again to Him;
But distorted faith would not admit
That ought outside of itself was fit
To help men rise, so it turned aside
To sneer and scoff at the brave who tried.

THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR (1918)

The year is nearly ended,
Another year is near;
Pause now upon the threshold,
In hope, and faith, and fear.

Hope's vision bids us onward,
Beneath its cheering ray,
To days that ever brighten
Toward the perfect day.

Faith bids us trust the future
In Hands that wisely guide,
And Love that for its children
Doth ever well provide.

Fear casts its doubting mantle
On faith and vision fair;
And shows us how unable
We are new life to dare,

How frail our powers to battle
With the increasing pain,
How costly every effort,
How trifling every gain.

But here we may not linger,
For onward comes the year;
And we must make the journey
In hope, and faith, and fear.

But let us pause in prayer,
Ere we its threshold cross,
And ask to leave behind us
All life that's only dross;

To fear no evil ever,
Howe'er robust it be,
But brightened by hope's vision
Face toward eternity.

Be our years few or many,
In faith to seek our goal,
Until we cross the river
Where silent shadows roll;

Until in glorious sunlight
On Zion's peaceful shore,
We find th' appointed mansions
With Love for evermore.

THE LAST ACT

Across the stage of village life he passed,
 Bearing the wage his skill and strength had won,
Straight to the mart of bottled woe and shame,
 And drank and bought till what he bore was done.
Then, to the street, not knowing where he turned,
 Half-seeing and half-conscious staggered on;
Now clutching at the trees, now creeping past,
 Now stumbling o'er some tiny rise or stone.
He reached the rail and blundered down its course
 While deeper grew the stupor of his brain;
He tripped and fell, unheeding and unseen,
 Across the path of the incoming train.
The gleaming light awoke no sense of fear,
 No meaning had the engine's warning bell;
One moment thus, — the next in quivering shreds —
 And so, amid the noise, the curtain fell.

THE CREED OF DEED

An active love and a lover's meed,
 And the longest life is sped;
But acts of spite, with concentric night,
 Make each day of life a dread.
Love that gives itself in giving,
 Is love by Christ's spirit led.

THE WAY OF LIFE

This morning there left, from the depot, for the
gateway of the West,
Two brave young folks, whose riches were largely
the hopes that blest;
And a little party of four or five stood there to say
good-bye,
Trying their best to look cheerful though more in-
clined to sigh.
Three fond sisters and a younger brother it seemed
to me they were,
For all had similar features and all the same fair
hair.
And I think the fifth was the mother of the boy
who went away,
For her face was marked with anguish like those,
who, fearing, pray.
When the heavy wheels began to turn at the im-
pulse of the steam
Her features firmer still were set; I thought that
she would scream.
But as she waved her last farewell with shaky, hes-
itating hand,
A great sob shook her and her tears fell fast upon
the sand.
Then plain on her relaxing countenance, wet with
the falling tears,
I read the sadness of a heart fearful for coming
years.

TO THOSE WHO WAIT

Fathers and mothers, who have sons that go
In martial rank to meet with freedom's foe,
 And in impatience wait,
What comfort is there in the vacant home,
While forth the armies of our bravest roam
 Beyond the home-land's gate?

Across the seas the fields with blood are red,
Where other fathers' bravest sons lie dead
 That freedom yet may stand;
That man, choosing his faith and country still,
May look o'er level plain to distant hill,
 And say "Beloved land."

No iron hand is on him laid to cross
Nature's best impulse with pride's vilest dross,
 And make him evil's slave;
His strength to train, by every art that's known,
To steal his brother's birthright and his own,
 When bidden by a knave.

But sheltered 'neath the roof he calls his own,
Where tyrant ne'er his brazen face has shown
 To cajole or to lie,
His children, he in honor's path may lead,
Body and soul with honest food may feed,
 Fearless of knavish spy.

Now they have gone, those bravest lads, to face
The devastating plague, manhood's disgrace,

The beast in human form.
Why does the weary hand, unwitting, clench,
The swelling heart feel th' unbidden wrench,
Foresensing war's red storm?

Ah! These the hands that may not give nor take
The blows of war, when in fierce struggle break
The surging human waves,
When, charging through the hail of lead and fire,
Free men oppose the stroke of falsehood's ire,
To crush the demon's slaves.

These are the hands whose patient drill must be
On waiting land or labor of the sea,
With plough or hoe or net;
As useful, helpful, and, maybe, as brave,
As hands that serve on land, or on the wave,
With gun and bayonet.

And these the hearts that must suspense endure
Till victory shall freedom's cause assure,
And bid red ruin cease;
Not hopeless, for the Eastern sky doth glow
With greater brightness than our eyes can know,
Earnest of earth's release.

Jerusalem, downtrodden through long years,
Greatest in grief, a very fount of tears,
At last has found relief;
From untold cruel barbarism freed,
Shall she her royal noble self succeed,
Centre of earth's belief.

But still the heart must bear, it must not break,
While manhood's noblest treasures are at stake
 In battle's fire and smoke,
While all true men enleagued in armies stand
For right and freedom in each saddened land,
 Till evil's power be broke.

Till, like the brightness of the risen sun,
Out of the welter, when the fight is won,
 There cometh righteousness;
To men again the sense of brotherhood,
While evil, broken, undisguised, and nude,
 Receiveth just duress.

Till, in a greater glory than has been
On earth, new-born, this chastened earth is seen,
 To nobler, brighter life;
When more for others men themselves shall give,
For what is high and noble more shall live,
 For these alone shall strive.

THE ARMISTICE

The grim riot ceases. Again 'tis still;
So still, the ear may hear sweet nature's sounds,
As armies moving from embattled grounds
Make room for such as come their place to fill,
Those in retreat, advancing these, until
The line set by the conqueror shall be gained,
And "No Man's Land" of peace, by both ordained,
Be constituted by the common will.

There, resting on their arms, they patient wait
The scratching of the pen that signs the peace,
The closing of the breach, dark war's decease,
Dawning of brighter, better days, the gate
Through which shall enter, in its noble cause,
High-purposed union bearing righteous laws.

BENEFICENCE

'Twas but a smile with a word of greeting,
A common every-day kind of meeting;
But the heart that spoke through those smiling lips
Shed a grace that time has failed to eclipse;
And the smile is a treasure still as dear
As it was in that far-off yesteryear.

ALONE

Without are the drifting snows,
Within there is unknown speech;
Something there is must interpose,
Man is strange to man he knows,
Coldness instead of warmth he shows
Where he might kindness teach:
And one is lonely who might be glad,
Could a mouthful of native speech be had.

Without are the drifting snows,
Around are the unknown tongues;
The many have in their power the gift
That loneliness would from the lonely lift,
If but their attitude they would shift,
For they know the wanderer's speech:
But they heed not the prayer in his eyes
For the little so-much that speechless cries.

ESTRANGED

The loneliness of one outcast lay on his soul,
Within was burning still the sting of scorn he
bore ;

His prospect was dark waves that followed fast to
shore,
Where cruel breakers roared and blackness hid his
goal.

His lips, firm-set, scarce stifled an unmanly moan,
And eyes, through restrained tears, sought the
Eternal Throne
In wordless speech ; Alone ! O, leave me not alone !

That plea was sped by ministers unseen to men.
Forthwith he knew somewhat of courage lately
lost,
First springing of a purpose to oppose what
crossed

The ripening of life in duty within ken ;
His new-born purpose bids him seek himself to save,
And win an honored place beyond the fearful wave.
His lips relax and breathe the prayer : Bid me be
brave.

Black waters surge around him but he fears them
less ;
His soul, undrowned, recovers somewhat from
its pain,
While comradeship unseen aids him to bear the
strain

The storm-driven waters in their wildness fiercely
press
Upon his course; there is more light, fears slowly
yield
Before hope's rising power. He yet will win the
field
Where service finds its need by Love eternal sealed.

BOTTLE-FED

Th' alluring softness of a mother's breast
Misfortune to their baby days denied.
The first strange emptiness from which they cried
Was not against a bosom's warmth expressed,
But by an alien subterfuge suppressed.
Their later years have with their childhood vied;
Always, to them, the milk of love denied,
The essence sweet that others' ills redressed.

Incessant hungers all their days infest,
Insatiates, they, of many foods they've tried,
Still crying, as in babyhood they cried,
(Their cry by vanity of years repressed)
For that one lack a mother's breasts suggest,
Love, fond caresses, and the joy of rest.

FROM THE DEPTHS

We were, — Oh, so happy, Remi and I,
Before France called him in her noble cause,
One sweet, long, lovely dream of three glad years —
More joyful could not be, nor ever was.

I was grieved when he went yet still was glad,
Though in a quieter way, for France is dear.
Baby was with me, and Remi was gay
As he said, “Goodbye, darling, do not fear.”

Two years he fought, and failed not to renew,
With each relief, the memory of our joy
And hopes that when the Boche was broken quite
We would rejoice again, we and our boy.

Three times, on leave, he hastened here to spend
The precious days our country set him free
From its brave service with our babe and me.
Brief glad hours these, more tender lest they'd be

The last we'd spend together. We could not
Chase that sad thought, how glad soe'er we were;
For many came not back. Already five wound-stripes
On his sleeve, and two decorations fair

Upon his breast showed he had been full oft
Among the foremost. Oft I drove away
The thought that made me shudder 'gainst my will.
The steel might pierce a vital spot. Then, say, —

We made our last farewell, both striving still
To hide in gayety our growing dread.
That night I wept, when, wearied with his play,
I laid our baby in his little bed.

My grief had come to stay. I, who had lived
A life of laughter, bore a heavy heart
Thenceforward. Ere a full month had gone by
Baby was stricken, and we two must part.

Brief was the fight unconsciously he made
Against the fever which burned out his life.
His struggles ended, but they do not fade
From out my thought, though from the greater
strife

Shortly the greater shadow fell. Remi,
Remi had made the sacrifice complete,
When many Frenchmen died, as heroes do,
That France, dear France, that day escape defeat.

They sent his medal and his cross to me,
Proud memories of my Remi who has gone;
But while pride's salve may soothe, it cannot heal
The stricken heart two graves have turned to
stone.

I go about my work with neither tears
Nor laughter, and they bid me be discreet.
I know they fear I shall go mad. What then
Is madness? If you from a life delete

All that it was, — mine was joy and laughter —
Is it more madness that that empty life
Should be unlike its happy former self
Than to be like? Tell me, why should its strife

Be to be what it is not? When the heart
Is overborne with grief, and numb and cold,
Would hollow laughter not be mockery,
And force-made smiles a charnel house unfold?

I still have France; and, in my stony way,
I'll serve her till the heart has ached its last;
Till on her mangled breast another mound
Shall mark, of our glad three, the last one passed.

I see the curé on the street. He goes
To comfort others who have lost their all.
A gentle, kind old man, — they say his words
Help them to bear the loss of those who fall.

Remi and I, we thought that God and Faith
Were but the foibles of the feeble mind,
We loved and laughed and never gave a thought
To church or creed or ought of sim'lar kind.

For me, — the burden comfortless, alone,
Save in the memories of the gladsome past.
Laughter was mine; now stony grief remains
Till stone shall rise o'er stony heart at last.

THE SURRENDER

They boasted victory when they fought and fled
From Jutland's waters and the British fleet;
Yet, through long waiting, never dared to meet
The incessant watchers o'er the billows spread.
Now, 'twixt the gray stern lines that mark the way
To prison, 'neath their hated foes' control,
Inglorious, abject, to its shameful goal
Their proud armada goes. Not this the day
They prayed for, built for, longed for through the
years,
With tyrant will and murderous hands to press
Dominion all around by frightfulness.
Bereft of power, unmasked, vile now appears
Their vaunting brutal spirit which, in pride,
Scorned truth, and honor now to them denied.

WIND OF THE SOUTHLAND

Wind of the Southland, that should bring
Warmth and winsomeness of Spring,
Why this tearful blustering?

While we list for the robin's song,
From first light the whole day long,
Why should thy fierce outbursts throng?

Why not in zephyrs gently creep
Cross the level and the steep,
Soothing Winter into sleep?

Why not with sunshine and the blue,
Of Spring's gladness, peeping through
With promises of verdure new?

Winter's favors have ceased to please;
Hearts are longing for leaving trees,
For nesting birds and crooning bees.

Wind of the Southland, bring us now
Singing bird to the swinging bough,
And pastures green where cattle low.

HOUSE OF QUIET

My view, by scrubby trees confined,
A little house includes,
But seldom people come to break
Its quiet solitude.

A few scrub fowls, of varied hue,
Scratch here and there around;
No gardening dreams have e'er disturbed
The wild things of the ground.

Sometimes a woman, shoulders bent,
Moves with uncertain gait
To hang a dish-rag on a line,
Or scrape crumbs from a plate.

At morn and eve an old man comes
With water-pails to fill;
But through the hours that lie between
The house seems to be still.

No feet of laughing children play
Around its silent doors,
From out its windows, shaded low,
No pleasant music pours.

Once, like a vision from afar,
A girl hurried in,
But quickly hurried out again
As if a race to win.

Two lamps are lit at once each dusk,
Together in one room,
Then one is carried thence to break
Another chamber's gloom.

Each day, it seems, unchanging,
Is like the one before;
There's little life and little joy
E'er visits at that door.

COMING HOME

For months the ocean vast has rolled between
The field in which they did their service there
And that in which we served, the home-land fair.
Now with us many vacant chairs are seen
Waiting, mute symbols of the hearts and arms
That, speaking not, yet utter frequent prayer,
In voiceless crying to their God to spare
And bring their loved ones safe from all that harms.

Martial delusion slowly fades, as sense
Of lust defeated in its bloody course
Dawns on the braggarts who, without remorse,
Now sue for peace. Then to their recompense
The soldiers of the right come gladly home.
O ocean! Speed them safely o'er thy foam.

CHRISTMAS EVE, 1918

Ye who, for four long years, have bowed in sadness,
Be glad to-night.

Let grief, that wrung the heart, now deepen glad-
ness;

The world is breaking from its reign of madness;
Behold the light!

The souls that gave themselves to bar oppression's
sway

Lift up their scarred and pleading faces to the day;
To all give right.

Be glad to-night;

The ben'son that from Bethlehem's cradle spread
Again arises, as new-born from the dead,

To clear men's sight;

That they may see their welfare in each other's face,
Their Father's lineaments in each other trace,

In Heaven's clear light.

SUSPENSE

Another ache, and then another yet;
The oft-repeated question of the eye;
Breathing uneven, tense, almost a sigh;
The fear as of an overhanging debt;
Watching the mail route, where the box is set,
With eager, anxious, swift-returning gaze,
Which, of itself, sufficiently betrays
Unspoken dread of evil fortune met.

The postman passes. Oh! Why comes there not
Through all those weary days some tidings clear,
Some news of home-bound loving footsteps near,
A joyful presence that is ne'er forgot?
How long must hearts be lonely and still bear
Without relief save in unanswered prayer!

GONE

He is gone. Dead! He who stood to the last,
In the fight for bread, that his home might be
A shelter love ruled, not necessity;
And stricken there, like a soldier he passed.
His warfare ended, his duty complete,
No discords break his spirit's deep repose;
But, in rest where disturber never goes,
He waits his body from its winding-sheet.

Gone! "Gone West." 'Tis a worthy phrase they use
When soldier-comrades at their side are slain.
The West is glorious, if 'tis full of pain,
When day departs. Are not its glorious views,
Which, elsewhere, break in morn as night falls here,
Assurance of that morn, beyond life's veil,
Where other spheres the parting spirits hail,
And life is strong again when day is clear?

COMFORT

A speck of blue amid the ashen gray,
A tiny brightening of the darkened sky,
A hope of fairer weather almost here,
Earnest of good throughout the passing year;
The first clear note of a glad thankful cry
That bursts forth, unrestrained, like some fair ray
Which from a pure and lustrous sphere o'erhead,
Unpurposed, is in its effulgence shed.

A word of cheer when woes and dirges sound,
A hand which thrusts aside our darksome dreads,
And rends the veil of mist, that grief o'erspreads,
With strong assurance good shall yet abound;
And that, as after rain fresh clouds return,
So shall the sun again their masses spurn.

CAST THY BREAD UPON THE WATERS

Our bread upon the waters? We whose strength
From day to day by scant supply maintains
Its waning power against our journey's strains,
And threatens failure ere we come, at length,
Where we desire. From that spent store shall we
Give bread who scarce a crumb have left to feed
The hungry sparrow who proclaims his need,
And asks our pity from his near-by tree.

If crumbs we take, the sparrow hungry goes;
If bread unbroken, we must share his lot;
Tighten our girdles, and eschew the pot,
Lest, empty, it remind us of our woes.
Shall man and sparrow both an-hungered fast
That on the waters all their food be cast?

The waters through their many courses gain
The changeful, wide, and deep mysterious sea,
That filling, never fills but sets them free,
By nature's alchemy, to reach again
The place from which they came. Then may our
bread

In manner like, by alchemy more rare,
Be from those waters borne again with care
Back to the hand by which it first was spread.

Who gives, receives. With added benison
The gift returns, though none can see the cord
That binds the gifts from out our scanty hoard

To those received, nor tell the course they've run;
Only, upon the waters' bosom cast,
Bread comes again after due season past.

Our bread! Our life! Not one sustaining sheaf
From God's great wheat-field that around us lies,
But all we garner, through our many ties,
Be cast upon the waters, as a leaf
To float away upon the streamlet's breast.
All of our life! Then all our life must be
Worthy if it would re-act worthily
Upon our fellows in the path to rest.

We give it to the waters knowing not
To whom, nor when, nor where, it comfort lends;
The hand that gave it other mercies sends,
Our daily bread, proof we are not forgot;
From source to sea, from sea to source they flow
In mystic movement nought can e'er o'erthrow.

